

Ramparts of Fort Mackinac,
Mackinac Island, Mackinac County,
Michigan.

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WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
District of Michigan

Historic American Buildings Survey
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NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
STATE PARK CONSERVATION WORK



Report on Existing Ramparts and Buildings at old Fort Mackinac, on Mackinac Island, together with Recommendations for their Eventual Restoration.

Mackinac Island, located in the Straits of Mackinac, at the head waters of Lake Huron, was the object of contention of three nations before the beginning of the 17th century. From the time Jean Nicolet, the first white man to view the marvel of the inland seas in 1634, pushed the prow of his birch canoe through its crystal waters, till well after the entity of America was assured among the nations, the magic word "Michilimackinac" had an important place in the council of Kings. It was the key to the vast fur country of the upper Mississippi valley and the upper lakes. Thru its warehouses and in its batteau came the mink and beaver that adorned the aristocracy of Europe. It was the port of departure of expeditions against the Indians of the North-west and even against the Spaniards of the south who, with covetous eyes, were intruding for a share of the wealth from its forests. It was this wealth which, after the dream of a north-west passage had faded from the minds of the early French, furnished the urge for possession. The fur trade was enormous. From the time when Robert Cassin's ship, the Griffin, first boat of burden to be built on the upper lakes, was sighted loaded with pelts on its fatal trip from Green Bay, to the hey-day of the American Fur Company in 1829, the wealth passing thru the customs at Mackinac was the enormous annual sum of three millions of dollars. Small wonder that the British, after the Treaty of Paris in 1763, were loath to surrender Fort Mackinac and so maintained control at this strategic to Americans. By one pretext after another, they continued in occupying the post of importance till a second treaty in 1795 to some extent restored it to the United States. The period of this period leading between 1763 and 1795 was a time of great importance in the history of the region.

ish Headquarters at Quebec and the commandants of the "Upper Posts" clearly express the feeling that the treaty tables of England had too easily surrendered a most valuable possession.

It was not for long, however. For, on July 17, 1812, we find Lieutenant Porter Hanks marching his American garrison with arms reversed out onto the drill ground back of the old fort to be surrendered to the British Captain Roberts. He, with a few canoe men and a band of Indians, had left his stockade on St. Joseph Island in the St. Mary's River less than 26 hours before and now, without firing a shot, found himself in possession of the coveted Fort Mackinac. This was the first act of the war on the upper lakes and points again to the value placed upon the island by the British Colonial Office. There followed the disastrous attempt of the Americans to recoup their loss at the Battle of Mackinac Island. Here the old fort defied the guns of a fleet—not because of the strength of its ramparts but because of their height. When within range, the pieces would not elevate sufficiently. The American Captain Sinclair then attempted a blockade. Due to gross negligence on the part of the officer left in command, both vessels were brought into the Island harbor flying the colors of King George. Once again in 1815 it was no lack of arms but the treaty table at Ghent that gave Mackinac back to the Americans and they moved in with a vengeance. We find Colonel Butler writing to the Secretary of War in August of 1815—"our troops (240 strong) reached the Island on the 18th (July) and in 30 minutes we had possession of the fort.-----The old Fort Michilimackinac is in excellent order."

From the date of Butler's letter to 1825 things must have changed for the worse for in that year Capt. Wm. Hoffman complains that the fort is in a ruinous condition.

Signed at Ghent, Dec. 24, 1814 and ratified Feb. 17, 1815.
Colonel Butler to Sec. of War, Aug. 6, 1815. Files of War Department at Washington.
1825 Report of Captain Wm. Hoffman to the Sec. of War in files of War Department.

He evidently had more time to be-ween his fate than to effect repairs for he counts 187 broken panes of glass in one building and 63 in another. He is so discouraged that he even offers a proposal to abandon the fortress on the heights and build a new works in the garden below. Fortunately a new commandant, two years later,^{*5} views conditions in a different light and prepares a definite program of reconstruction which the Secretary of War approved to the extent of \$5,000.00. Old Fort Mackinac had once more averted a catastrophe.

The post was variously occupied and abandoned from 1839 till the Civil War. During the summer of 1862 there were housed in the old log officers quarters three famous prisoners of war from the Confederacy, two southern generals and Judge Sild. The fort was abandoned the following September and occupied again after the Peace of Appomattox. The occupation from then on was continuous till the final evacuation emptied its barracks in 1895. The Island and fort of Mackinac were this same year, by act of Congress, added to the park system of the State of Michigan.

So much for the background of history that enshrouds the island in romance. It is with the fort and buildings within the stockade that we are especially concerned.

Patrick Sinclair,^{*6} builder of Fort Mackinac, was a most picturesque character. Commissioned as he was in 1778 directly by George III, he arrived at old Fort Michilimackinac on the mainland just west of the present Mackinaw City a few years^{*7} later prepared to live up to his proud title of "Lieutenant Governor and Superintendent of the post of Michilimackinac."

*5 March 1827, Sec. of War to Captain Alex R. Thompson.

*6 See sketches of Sinclair's life by William I. Jenks in Mich. Hist. Coll. Vol. 30.

*7 Arrived October 4, 1779.

His reporting senior was General Fred Haldimand in Quebec and their frequent letters,⁹⁸ down to the time of Sinclair's virtual recall in 1782⁹⁹ for excessive and extravagant expenditures, make fascinating reading. From the very beginning, he urged removal of Fort Michilimackinac to the Island.¹⁰⁰ So confident was he of gaining official sanction, that we find him writing his friend Capt. Brehm, aide de camp to Haldimand, on February 15, 1780¹⁰¹ that he has accumulated 16,000 feet of sawn plank and "The men's barracks on this side will remove with ease and little trouble, as we shall saw the shingle roof in pieces fit for transportation." This, tho he had been but three and a half months at his station.

During 1780-81, Sinclair was continuously employed in removing the worth-while buildings from the mainland to the island. In a letter to Haldimand of July 8, 1781,¹⁰² he says, "We have raised the old Provision Store, the Soldier's Barracks with stone chimnies, the Powder Magazine stonework—and have kept raising the defences of the fort which receive our rubbish." His letters are optimistic in the extreme and were often accompanied by drafts drawn on the General. These drafts reached enormous proportions. In 1781 Sinclair drew on Haldimand for 43,000 pounds which was an increase of 35,000 pounds over 1780. In January 1782 one draft went out for 43,000 pounds for the King's works. This was followed in April by another for 9,500 pounds and in July by 20,000 more. The enormous expenditure caused a great deal of concern at Headquarters and resulted in an investigation being instituted by Haldimand.¹⁰³ Three days after the investigators arrived at Fort Mackinac, the fiery Sinclair turned his command over to Captain Robertson and left for Quebec. Justification for the inquiry existed however, for exclusive of the tremendous sums advanced to the Indian Department; nearly 500,000 pounds¹⁰⁴

⁹⁸ In the Canadian archives at Ottawa. Most of the letters have been reprinted in Michigan History Coll., Vol. 3, 1882.

⁹⁹ Sept. 15, 1782, Sinclair left the island.

¹⁰⁰ Letter of Gen. F. Haldimand to Sinclair, Mich. Hist. Coll., Vol. 3, P. 55.

¹⁰¹ Sinclair to Brehm, Feb. 15, 1780, Mich. Hist. Coll., Vol. 3, P. 53.

¹⁰² Sinclair to Haldimand, July 8, 1781, Mich. Hist. Coll., Vol. 3, P. 57.

¹⁰³ Report of Lieut. Col. Brehm to Haldimand, Sept. 20, 1782, Mich. Hist. Coll., Vol. 3, P. 59.

¹⁰⁴ Sketch of Sinclair's career, Mich. Hist. Coll., Vol. 3, P. 57.

had been spent by the Crown on the Fort alone.

Of the walls and buildings erected by Governor Patrick Sinclair from 1780 to '82, we are forced to admit that probably very little actually remains. The undisputed works would include the lower stonework along the greater part of the south rampart toward the bay, possibly portions of the east 25 feet of the basement wall under the Commissary Store which was formerly the Powder Magazine, and the lower masonry of the Stone Quarters to about one-third of its present height.

Concerning the three black houses, we shall see presently that the date of their erection is open to question. Furthermore, all British work on the fort stopped with the leaving of its motivating spirit, Patrick Sinclair. The officer to whom he surrendered the command, Capt. Robertson, was inspired with but one idea—that of reducing expenses.

It is safe to say that no work whatever was done on the buildings or fortifications and

then came the news of the Treaty of Paris^{*15} and the great uncertainty of the Crown retaining title to the Upper Posts. Haldimand's order of April 26, 1783 was to "Totally cease

from carrying on the fortification and all public works whatever".^{*16} The British buildings were thru but the work was not finished. On Aug. 26, 1784 we find Capt. Robertson writ-

ing to Secretary Mathews at Quebec— "The works were never meant to stand above a season".^{*17}

The picketting of the Fort—requires repairing after every shower of rain and gust of

wind.^{*18} In a report of Gother Mann, Capt. of Royal Engineers made four years later, we

find, "The Fort itself has never been completed—and the Rampart but partly raised, but

a picketting has been raised upon it all around, which now begins to be very rotten, —

The soldiers Barracks is in indifferent repair."

*15 The preliminary Treaty of Peace was signed Nov. 30, 1782.

*16 Haldimand to Gen. Maclean, Apr. 26, 1783. Mich. Hist. Colls. XI, 361.

Robertson to Mathews, August 26, 1784. Mich. Hist. Colls. XI, 449.

*18 Capt. Gother Mann to Lord Dorchester, Dec. 1788. Mich. Hist. Colls. XII, 55.

It remained for the Americans after their much delayed occupation in October, 1796 to complete Fort Mackinac. That it was not complete at that time, is shown by an inventory submitted by the retiring British Commander under date of September 1, 1796. This is a careful document describing all the buildings and, known as the "Burbeck Report",^{*13} it formed the basis of this officer's account to General Anthony Wayne concerning the American occupation of the island. After mentioning the decayed condition of the framing, picketting and platforms of the Fort, the report says, "A range of stone buildings, intended for [officer] barracks have been carried up as high as the second story. They are 105 feet long by 51 feet wide. Walls are tolerable good order. Sleepers of second floor and window frames are decayed. Roof has not been put on or the eash placed." This is in contrast to the report made four years later by Uriah Tracy to the Secretary of War under date of Dec. 20, 1800,^{*20} which indicated that a definite building program had been in progress. He points out that the Fort has a strong wall, a well of never failing water, a bomb-proof used as a magazine and says, there is "One stone barracks for the use of the officers, equal if not superior to any building of the kind in the United States, a good guard house and barracks for soldiers and convenient store house for provisions, etc. with three strong and convenient block houses." Thus it was that Pett Sinclair's dream of a sufficient Fort on the heights of Mackinac came to be realized--altho not under the flag that he served.

For the purpose of this report, let us consider separately the ramparts and the buildings in and adjacent to the enclosure, (1) as regards their history and original construction (2) their present condition, and (3) their maintenance and possible future restoration. In some cases, construction dates are obscured by fires which have occurred--a few buildings having burned more than once.

*13 Major Henry Burbeck occupied Fort Mackinac from Det. in Oct. 1796 with 2 companies of militia. Letter Huron, Foster to Major Burbeck--Files of War Dept. at Washington, D.C.
*20 Uriah Tracy to Samuel Dexter, Dec. 20, 1800--Mich. Hist. Colls. XXXVIII, 86.

The information for this report has been secured from various sources and authority is quoted where possible. Numerous residents and former residents of Mackinac Island have been interviewed and their old books and pictures perused; the records and drawings in the vault of the Mackinac Island State Park Commission have been carefully studied and compared with measured drawings of the principal buildings, which drawings accompany this report; the books and documents assembled in the Burton Historical Collection at Detroit have been studied; and those British documents from the Canadian Archives at Ottawa which have been reprinted in the Michigan and the Wisconsin Historical Collections have been painstakingly searched for Mackinac material. The archives of the War Department at Washington have not been reviewed, there being no published collection of these papers. Covering as they do the period of American occupation since 1815, which is also the period of construction of most of the present buildings, they undoubtedly contain much information which would be invaluable to this report.

I. THE RAMPARTS

1. Historical:

When Governor Patt Sinclair was considering the project of a fort on Mackinac Island, he requested that an engineer be sent on from Quebec.^{*21} General Haldimand, however, instructs Brehm to write on April 17, 1780, "I am sorry His Excellency cannot spare you an Engineer to conduct the works of your new Post, but he has that confidence in your abilities as to think you will be able to proceed very well without one."^{*22} This gave Sinclair the latitude he wished to go ahead with his ambitious plans. He established such an area on the heights that could only be defended by a garrison of 300 men. It was the subject of complaint by most of the inspection officers from then on. Lieut. Hockings in his report on the fortifications in 1784^{*23} says, "From the great extent of the lines of defence, it appears the present garrison is not sufficient for the defence of such a Fort, and from the great irregularity of the works and being incomplete in so many

*21 Sinclair to Brehm, Oct. 7, 1779, Mich. Hist. Colls. II, 533.

*22 Brehm to Sinclair, April 17, 1780, Mich. Hist. Colls. II, 533.

*23 Hockings's Report, Sept. 20, 1784, Mich. Hist. Colls. X, 642.

places, it does not appear to me possible to contract it without exposing parts to be surprised." Again six years later, we find in the report of Capt. Gother Mann of the Royal Engineers ^{*24} a criticism of the size of the fortification. He says, "I cannot help being of the opinion that as a Military Post, the greater part of the expense bestowed here has been a waste of money. If the works were intended as a defense against misquetry or Indians only, too much was designed and if against Cannon, far too little, and most of that ill judged".

✓ A drawing of the fort which accompanied Hocking's Report in 1782 ^{*25} shows that Sinclair's plan embraced much more than the present enclosure. There were two bastions symmetrically placed toward the North, the western one of which must have extended out considerably behind officer's quarters number 3. There is a sketch made by Lieut. Massey of ^{*26} the United States Army in 1797 which shows the same outline but increased by a salient toward the west taking in the ground where the West Block House now stands. The fort area was subsequently reduced, in all probability during the American occupation about the year 1798, when there seems to have been an extensive building program. The east and west salients were eliminated together with the two north bastions. The area was decreased about one fourth and the walls established where we find them today.

It is probable that of the stone ramparts, only the lower portion of the south wall facing the bay can be original and perhaps but a part of that. There are several recommendations in the British reports that the walls on this side be heightened and more than one letter telling of accidental breaks that occurred along this precarious rampart. The frequent repairing of the breaks which no doubt has continuously taken place has tended to obscure the original masonry. To quote from one or two of the early letters, we refer again

^{*27} to Capt. Gother Mann's report of Dec. 6, 1788. He says, "I had a part of it (the picketting)

*24 Capt. Gother Mann Report, Dec. 6, 1788. Mich. Hist. Colls. XII, 35.

*25 Mich. Hist. Colls. X, 641.

*26 Files of War Department at Washington, D.C.

*27 Mich. Hist. Colls. XII, 35.

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toward the Bay shored up while I was there, but the bank having slipped from under the wall, there is an opening of forty or fifty feet long into the Fort." And again, Capt. Doyle, commanding at Michilimackinac in 1793 writes, "There is a very considerable breach in the wall of the Fort facing the Basin, which was occasioned by violent rain at the breaking up of the frost. The length of the breach, is thirty eight feet, having nearly extended to the gate. The wall was irregular, being at the side of the Hill, and from twelve to twenty feet in height. A principal platform (gun platform) was rendered useless having received support from that wall—I have stopped up the breach by strong booms, which—is all that can be done without building upon a new foundations." ^{*29} Very naturally the British, after the preliminary Peace of Paris, were not maintaining the walls for the early benefit of the Americans.

Concerning the early construction of the ramparts, it was soon evident that the material for the log work had been poorly chosen and the masonry too quickly and carelessly built to endure. Sinclair himself, in one of his early letters to headquarters ^{*30} calls attention to the fact that, "The timber nearest and, of course in our situation, the most convenient is of that kind that will not last above a few years necessity." ^{*31}

*28 Capt. Doyle to Lieut. Col. England, May 16, 1793. Mich. Hist. Coll. XII, 46.

*29 Note: It seems probable that this breach occurred just to the east of the rock protrusion called "Gibraltar Crag" between the two gun platforms. This has always been a weak portion of the rampart as the cliff here is particularly precipitous and the bed rock tends to recede toward the fort wall. Upon my preliminary examination in July of 1904, I found a stone relieving arch in the base of the wall above this place of poor bearing and a much rotted log cribbage below and in front of it. Investigation showed that the arch was an old one but had been relaid in 1829 and the cribbage had been in place at least since 1898. Under the present Emergency Reconstruction Program of the National Park Service, a bearing was chiselled in the face of the cliff and a stone retaining wall in 2 stages built up from below, adequately supporting this place of weak bearing.

*30 Sinclair to Mathews, Feb. 23, 1781—Mich. Hist. Colls. IX, 629.

*31 Must mean the local white cedar which is an open grain quick growing wood.

Capt. Robertson says in 1784, "^{*32}The works were never meant to stand above a season——". And Gother Mann four years later reports "^{*33}The Fort itself has never been completed, the ditches, which are in the rock, are very little excavated, and the Rampart but partly raised,——a picketting has been raised upon it all round, which now begins to be very rotten."

The method used for building bulk stone work was not conducive to permanency. There was none of the classic fitting of one block upon another. The impetuous Sinclair demanded speedy results. This was gained by building a veneer of mortared stones on two sides of a wall and filling the interior with loose rubble. Sinclair himself reported in an early letter to Haldimand we- "^{*34}Have kept raising the defenses of the Fort which receive our rubbish." An inspection of the stone walls, made possible by the present reconstruction program, has confirmed this as being the way they were built. It accounts for most of the failures of the masonry and is the reason why continued maintenance will be necessary. The frost, gaining entrance to the porous interior, tends to heave off the outer veneer of bedded stones.

As regards the construction of Sinclair's ramparts, the plan of the fortification accompanying Hacking's Report shows that, except for the south side toward the bay, they were mainly formed of double log walls filled between with earth. The log work, as noted, above, was easily rotted out, and the walls and platforms were almost continually out of repair.

*32 Robertson to Mathews, Aug. 26, 1784-Mich. Hist. Colls. XI, 449.

*33 Capt. Gother Mann's Report on State of the Works, Mich. Hist. Colls. XII, 33-Dec. 6, 1788.

*34 Sinclair to Haldimand, July 8, 1781-Mich. Hist. Colls. X, 495.

Planted on top of the log or stone walls, there was usually a row of log fraising. This consists of sharpened stakes so placed that it would be difficult to climb around or over them.

2. Present Condition

The stone ramparts of the fort are now in very fair condition. The emergency work at the base of the south wall between the gun platforms has been done. A permanent repair was here effected which remedies a condition that has always been menacing. A number of failures in the south and east stone work have been repaired and much pointing has been done.

The emergency program did not go beyond this point but there is more work of this nature which is in a threatening condition and which should soon be undertaken. The east rampart has much defective jointing which is liable to admit moisture with bad effects due to freezing. This is true in regard to a short piece of wall between the north sally-port and the School House (No. 16). It is also the condition of a short wall on the west side extending from the block house (No. 28) around the corner to the north bank. There is a bulged piece of stone on the fort side of the north wall, nearly over the sally-port arch. The joints here are tight due to a previous repointing. The arch itself has a longitudinal crack about at the center of the vault.

The wood picketting of the fort is in excellent condition. It was placed in 1929 and only differs from the original work in its manner of support and in its height, which is two feet lower. The original picketting was fastened together with several horizontal wood rails let into the inner face and secured with wood pegs.

3. Recommendations for Restoration.

There can be no thought of a restoration program which would put the ramparts of Fort Mackinac back where they were in the days of Fort Sinclair and the British. The present outline, while not original, has been in effect for over 135 years and is very well defined and enclosed by substantial walls and picketting. Neither would it be desirable to substitute

a log coping on the walls in place of the present, more practical, concrete coping. A log coping was in effect until 1911 and thru it, no doubt, entered most of the moisture that has done so much damage to the stone work.

I would like to recommend, however, the installation of log fraising along the top of the south ramparts—perhaps from the sally-port west to the further end of the stone quarters. This would be entirely authentic, in fact the stubs of the old fraising are still barely visable in front of the stone quarters. It could be easily accomplished and, I believe, it would lend a note of interest. It should consist of sharpened poles set in the bank at an angle about 18 inches apart.

The stone work of the ramparts will always require maintenance. The necessary pointing of the joints should be done regularly—at least every two years. Where the work is bulged—indicating a separation on the inside—it should be torn out and rebuilt. I believe the condition over the North sally-port is serious and should be remedied as soon as possible.

II THE BLOCK HOUSES (State Park Comm.—Nos. 28,29,30)

1. Historical

The three distinctive block houses, proud possession of Old Fort Mackinac for over one hundred years, having frowned upon the turbulent waters of the straits and upon the flags of two nations striving for their guardianship, were, in all probability, not "Built by the British in 1780" as so proudly announced to the thousands of annual visitors. They were more than likely built by the Americans. Mr. B. Frank Emery of Detroit, an earnest student of Mackinac Island, has pointed out that nowhere among the early documents of the British, from Patt Sinclair's occupation of the island in February of 1780 to the arrival of the American troops in October 1796, is there any reference to block houses having actually been built. Nor do block houses appear on any of the available maps or drawings of this period; on the contrary, they are conspicuously absent.

There are two preliminary references to block houses on the island in the early correspondence. On May 29, 1780 Sinclair writes to Brehm,^{*35} "I have one good block house erected for the defense of the wharf where the people sleep--(was of wood located on the present school lot near the bay and not on the fort. The wharf was opposite to the present Fort Street). It is of the largest cedar, hewed and well finished---. Three more are redly but I am afraid to raise them on the upper ground---". A little later, on June 21 of the same year, we find a letter written by a trader at the old fort on the mainland, Wm. Grant,^{*36} to Gen. Raldimand as part of a testimonial in favor of the Island site. He advocates removal to the island, "As then the Village will be thoroughly protected--- being immediately under the Command of the Fort, besides the Block Houses that Lieut. Governor Sinclair intends to erect." We have noticed before how Sinclair was apt to make optimistic forecasts in an effort to justify his tremendous expense account.

In support of Mr. Emery's contention, we might point out that the best written account of the buildings, that prepared by the British Lieut. Foster^{*37} at the time of his turning the fort over to the Americans, contains no mention of any block houses. His document is a painstaking inventory of all the grounds and buildings and it would be unaccountable that any existing structure should be omitted. The best drawing of the Fort is that accompanying Hooking's Report of 1782.^{*38} Neither this nor the sketch of Lieut. Massey made in 1797 shows any indication of block houses. The conclusion is that they were erected after the American occupation of the fort, probably at the time of the rebuilding of the ramparts. We have seen how this took place about 1785, but was after Lieut. Massey made his drawing. That there was a general rebuilding program is evident from

*35 Sinclair to Brehm, May 29, 1780; Mich. Hist. Colls. II, 204.

*36 Opinion of Wm. Grant, June 21, 1780; Mich. Hist. Colls. II, 204.

*37 The Burbeck Report, Sept. 1, 1784. In the files of the War Dept. at Washington.

*38 See Mich. Hist. Colls. I, 841.

*39 In the files of the War Dept. at Washington.

early part of that year, there is little doubt. In July of 1797 we find a letter from Gen. Wilkinson,^{*40} Commander in Chief of the American forces, directing Capt. Porter to report to Mackinac to assist in the work of reconstruction of the fort. In September of that same year, he mentions to the Quartermaster General^{*41} the need for block houses and says that two will be required. However, by the report of Uriah Tracy to the Secretary of War in December 1800^{*42} we are assured that, in addition to the other buildings, the fort now has "three strong block houses."

The three block houses were built of similar construction. They were all three stories high and from 16 to 20 feet square. They had lime stone walls 2 feet thick for the two lower stories and the upper story of each was constructed of squared logs 6 inches thick laid horizontal. The hip roofs were framed of heavy squared timbers with heavy tie beams terminated in place. Originally, all block houses had a fire place in each story—at least all except the west block house (28). The chimney here, and consequently the fire places, was added after it was built. This is shown by the fact that there are no bond stones between the chimney and lower walls and also by there being loop holes for musketry^K on the exterior which, if produced thru the wall, would have to cut thru the chimney. This block house, because of there first being no chimney and also because it is four feet shorter in each dimension than the others, was probably the first one built.

The block houses have had various uses. They were occupied by townspeople who were prisoners of war after the British surprised the fort early in the War of 1812. Later they contained the women and children during the American blockade. Still later they housed some of the families of the non-commissioned officers. In 1875 the east

*40 Wilkinson to Capt. Porter, July 25, 1797. In files of War Department at Washington.

*41 Wilkinson to Qm. General, Sept. 9, 1797. Mich. Hist. Colls. V.35, P.628.

*42 Uriah Tracy to Samuel Dexter, Dec. 20, 1800. Mich. Hist. Colls. XXVIII-86.

block house (No. 30) was the powder magazine, the one on the north was the blacksmith shop, and that on the west a store room.^{*43} About 1880 the last was a paint shop and the north block house contained the fort water reservoir in the upper story. The excessive load of this water tank reacted to the detriment of the structure. The poorly built masonry settled and cracked and the crevices in the wall which were repaired during the 1934 work here were the result.

2. Present Condition.

The west block house (No. 28) is in very good condition. It seems to be better built than the others as regards the masonry and there are no failures in the outer walls. Due to the chimney having been added after the building was finished, some openings were present in the basement story which have been repaired during the present emergency reconstruction program. The timber work of the roof tie beams has also been partially renewed.

The north block house (29) is not in good condition. The masonry was badly damaged at the time it was used to support the water tank in the upper story. As a result the exterior walls are hollow where the load has bulged and split them. There were bad crevices in each corner. These have been cut out and patched in during the present emergency reconstruction which is sufficient for the present. However, under this program, it was impossible to tear them down and rebuild them as should be done. The timber work of the first floor has been replaced at some previous time with a shoddy construction of poles and boards. In the upper story, the roof timbers have been torn out, probably during the water tank episode, and as a consequence the old timbers and tie beams have disappeared. There is now an odd assortment of 2 inch stuff holding the roof together but in no way resembling the original sturdy mortised and tenoned beams and rafters. The stone chimney in the second story has been replaced with brick. The old market

^{*43} From the "Island of Mackinac" by J. Dursturnell, May 1875.

embrasures in the stone wall of the first story have all been plastered up. The original basement entrance has been closed by wooden steps which lead up to the first floor. The stone at the jambs of this entrance has shifted somewhat which accounts for some of the cracks which appeared above.

The east block house (30) is in good condition. The masonry has been repaired and the timber work replaced where it had rotted out. The chimney, at some time previous, has been partly taken down and now stops in the upper story without passing thru the roof. The wood floor of the first story is worn very thin--in places down to the sub-floor--especially in front of the fire place.

5. Recommendations for Restoration.

It is my idea that, should a restoration program be instituted, the block houses are the set of buildings that should be put back, as nearly as possible, to their original condition. They typify Fort Mackinac and are intensely interesting as being among the very few stone and timber blockhouses remaining in the entire country. Not only should they be authentic as to construction, but they should be equipped with the musket racks and other paraphernalia of early days and with light ordnance pieces which must somewhere still be procurable. The records tell us that in 1846 the upper story of each block house was equipped with two iron 6 pounders. Some of the old Mackinac guns may still be at Fort Brady where all the servicable pieces were sent on Oct. 9, 1894.

In a restoration of the buildings themselves, I would suggest the following changes:

The west block house (28) to have the maple finish floor in the first story replaced with one of wide boards. Because of the excessive traffic, I would use yellow pine having a good proportion of tight knots, in boards of 8 and 10 inches wide. The flooring to be dressed and matched and blind nailed in place. After nailing, I would face nail each board with old fashioned cut iron 6d nails set in rows about eight inches apart, with two nails in each board. The nails should not be set into the wood. They will wear bright and take a great deal of the abrasion. The floor should be finished with a thin coat of weathered

brown stain. The fireplace hearth in the first story is of cement. I would replace this with well worn brick. The roof is covered with wood shingles which are in fair condition. When reshingling is done on any of the fort buildings, I suggest using a particular asbestos-cement shingle made to imitate weathered wood and which was developed for the extensive Williamsburg Restoration in Virginia.^{*44} This is the next best thing in appearance to a weathered, hand split, 18 inch wood shake and has the advantage of fire-proofness and permanency. The hand split shake was the roof covering which replaced the original bark roofs as proven by old shingles found in one or two of the attics.

The north block house (No. 29) to have an entire new first floor construction consisting of hewn timber beams, rough sub floor, and a finish floor as suggested for the west block house. Enough remains of the old floor beams to determine their size and spacing. The 2 x 6 tie beams of the present roof should be removed together with the rafters and new hewn timbers put in their place. All timber intersections should be morticed and tenoned. The beam seats still showing in the top log of the outer walls will determine the arrangement of the timbers. The present entrance door of the building is inadequate. It should be replaced with a 2 ply plank door spiked together with the old type cut nails clinched on the back. To be hung on blacksmith-made strap hinges and to have other appropriate hardware of the same kind. I suggest that the present brick chimney, built no doubt after the water tank was removed, be torn down to the top of the stone work of the original chimney. This is at a point just below the second floor line. From here a new chimney of lime stone, patterned after the one in the west block house, should be constructed and carried up thru the roof. A brick fireplace hearth should be constructed in the 1st story and the basement fireplace, now walled up should be restored. The matter of restoring the original basement entrance should receive consideration, there being no way of entering at present. This entrance is below the steps serving the first story on the south. It might

^{*44} AGRAWAL ASSOCIATES CONSULTING ENGINEERS

^{*44} The so-called Williamsburg shingle made by the Federal Shingle Company, 100 CHASE, N.Y.

be opened thru to approach the level of the parade ground by building a stone retaining wall at either side with the walkway above carried over the top in the same manner that the other two block house entrances are handled. The old gun embrasures thru the stone walls of the first story have at some time been plastered up. I suggest that they be opened. The roof is covered with wood shingles which, when renewed, should be of the type recommended for the west block house.

The east block house (No. 30) to have a new sub floor in the main story. This to be 2 inch rough sawed plank in random widths of 6, 10, and 12. The present ¹⁵finish floor to be most carefully taken up by pulling the nails or driving them thru the boards with a nail set. The boards to be numbered to a key plan for correct replacing. They are random width 2 inch plank put together with splines in the joints. The material is knotty white pine and has worn to an interesting texture. There may be one or two boards which are worn entirely thru. These should be replaced with new material of the same kind. All nails in evidence to be the old type cut iron nail. The stone chimney should be extended thru the roof similar to that on the west block house. In the basement, I suggest that the fireplace opening, which is at present walled up, be restored. The roof of this block house is covered with red asphalt shingles. These should be removed and the asbestos-cement type recommended heretofore installed.

III THE GUARD HOUSE. (State Park Comm. No. 9)

1. Historical

In the early letters of Patt Sinclair concerning the removal of Fort Michilimackinac to the island, there is no mention of the building of a guard house. However, Hocking's map of the fort sent to Haldimand in September of 1782 shows such a building in the location it occupies today at the right of the south Sally-port. Seven months later we find in Robertson's letter to Mathews⁴⁵ a slight description of the original building. He says, "The old Guard House which I converted into a Barrack for two officers was accidentally burned
*45 Robertson to Mathews, April 20, 1783. Mich. Hist. Colls. XI, 358

by sparks falling on the roof of bark."

It is probable that the original guard house contained the dungeon that is there today. It is a stone walled pit eight by nine and five and half feet deep under the west part of the building. Each succeeding guard house has no doubt been built over this pit altho there never was a foundation wall to restrict the size until a stone wall was laid as part of the present reconstruction program. Thus it is that, while the British inventory of Sept. 1, 1796^{*46} mentions the guard house as, "A log work 14 $\frac{1}{2}$ feet long by 14 $\frac{1}{2}$ feet wide--- in good order", the present building is 18 by 30. We find reference to the guard house pit in a letter dated June 4, 1800^{*47} in which it is mentioned that an Indian was placed in the "Black Hole" and later taken out dead. Again in the report of Uriah Tracy to the Secretary of War^{*48} on December 20th of the same year there is mention of "A good guard house."

The date of the present building is doubtful. There is a reference to its having been rebuilt during the general renovation which the fort underwent in 1828. In a report of that years work made by Major J. Voss to the War Dept.,^{*49} the alteration of the guard house is noted as being complete. It is not clear how extensive these alterations were. However, in view of the delapidated condition which we know existed in 1825, it seems reasonable to assume that the present structure was built during the rebuilding period which followed-- or, in 1828. There is no evident way to prove that this date is correct. We do know, however, that the present building was in place in the early 1840's. It is clearly shown on a perspective drawing^{*50} of the fort made for the commanding officer, Captain Martin Scott.

2. Present Condition.

The guard house is now in good condition. There is a limestone wall foundation and the space below the floor joists is well ventilated. The old dungeon has been cleaned out and repaired and a trap door replaced over the old opening.

*46 Report of Lieut. Foster (British) to Major Burbeck, Sept. 1, 1796--Files War Dept. at Wash.
*47 Letter in files of War Department at Washington.
*48 Uriah Tracy to Samuel Dexter, Dec. 20, 1800. Mich. Hist. Colls. XLVIII, 86.
*49 Major J. Voss to Sec. of War, Dec. 15, 1828. In files of War Dept. at Washington, D.C.
*50 Drawing by W. Brenshute, private, Company I, 5th Reg.--Now in possession of Eleanor Temple, 15 Washington Square, New York, N.Y.

The roof is covered with wood shingles which are in fair condition. The interior of the old cell room has been divided up to form a bath room at one end. This was done in 1933 when the building was converted to a rentable apartment.

The construction of the building is heavy timber framing with studs between. All joints in the framing are morticed and tenoned. The cell room walls are planked clear around with two inch material.

5. Recommendations for Restoration.

I believe that, in the event of a restoration of the old fort buildings, the guard house should be one of the first to be put back in its former state. With its cell room, having the original iron barred door and tiny barred windows, and its dungeon beneath, entered by trap door from the guard room, it would become an intensely interesting adjunct to the attractions of Fort Mackinac.

To achieve this, the bathroom partition and plumbing should be removed and the large window now in the cell room should be changed back to the small heavily barred type. The maple floor should be removed and a floor of wide pine boards installed—the same as suggested for the west block house. The interior of the building is ceiled with beaded ceiling. The present paint should be removed and the walls and ceilings perhaps whitewashed. The guard room should be equipped with a gun rack and with two folding bunks supported on chains from the wall. This was, I believe, the original equipment.

As regards the rashingling of the roof, when this is done, I would recommend using the Williamsburg asbestos-cement shingle. There is a 6 x 6 wood vent extending from the floor of the guard room up into the attic. It formerly was carried thru the roof and I believe was for the purpose of supplying air to the dungeon. I believe this vent should be restored. I would like to see old type hardware placed on the entrance door. This should consist of strap hinges and a heavy surface type case lock.

IV THE WOOD OFFICERS QUARTERS (State Park Comm. No. 8)

1. Historical.

The date of construction of the Wood Officers Quarters or as it is often called because of its later use—the canteen, is not easily determined. Edwin O. Wood in his book, "Historic Mackinac,"^{*51} places it as 1835. I have not been able to find any authority for this statement.

There were, no doubt, buildings on this site at a much earlier date. On a rough sketch made in 1784 and now in the files of the War Department,^{*52} there appears a building marked, "Men's Barracks" in this location. In the inventory of the fort given to Major Burbeck at the time of the American occupation in 1796,^{*53} there is included under "Barracks"—"Another small building 20½ by 15½ feet wide of same construction (log) located on front toward the harbor." Evidently the building burned or was removed before 1797 for it does not appear on Lieut. Ebenezer Massey's sketch of the fort and town under that date.^{*54} Neither is it mentioned by Uriah Tracy in 1800.^{*55}

A reference which seems to pertain to this structure is found in a letter from Capt. Alex. Thompson^{*56} in 1827 in which he recommends certain improvements to the fort buildings. He says, "The Log Officers Quarters needs new doors, weather boarding, window repairs." An inspection of the present building during the recent reconstruction work has confirmed the fact of its being built of logs. The exterior walls are composed of 8 by 8 squared timbers tennioned into corner and intermediate posts. We find further, that the joints are chinked with plaster and that the outside has, at some time, received several coats of whitewash. If this building is the same referred to by Thompson, this fact would establish a prior date to Woods reference—for it is Thompson who advocates placing the weather boarding on a log building far from new in 1827.

*57 Map opposite P. 678 of Vol. 1—date of May 1905.

*58 A dimensioned drawing marked, "Rough Sketch of the part of the Fort enclosed by the main security." Marked 1784—Files of the War Department.

*53 Letter Lieut. Foster to Major Burbeck of Sept. 1, 1796. Files of War Department.

*54 Drawing of harbor, town, and fort lettered E.M. and date of 1797—Files of War Department.

*55 Uriah Tracy to Samuel Dexter, Sec. of War, Dec. 20, 1800—Mich. Hist. Collections.

*56 Capt. Alex. Thompson to Adj. General at Washington, Jan. 5, 1827. Files of War Department.

Other features of the building indicate an early construction date. The frame is pinned together and what few iron spikes that were used are of the genuine hand wrought variety.

I am of the opinion that this structure was built before 1827 and probably during the period from 1805 to 1817.

The building was originally used for accomodation of officers. It contained three sets of quarters, the east quarters, the center quarters and the west quarters. The first and last each contained two rooms as indicated on the drawings of the building. The center quarters was of one room. There were four fireplaces which was the only means of heating. In 1862 the three sets of quarters were occupied by three distinguished Southern prisoners kept at Fort Mackinac as hostages of war. After the fort was permanently re-occupied following the Civil War, the building was variously used as a store house and as a canteen. In 1894 the east portion was the pool room, the west room was the post library and the center room was the grog shop.

2. Present Condition.

The wood Officers Quarters is in very good condition. It has been raised during the present reconstruction program and a concrete and limestone foundation placed beneath. The joists and sills have been renewed and there is provision for ventilating the area below the floor. The roof is covered with red asphalt shingles.

The east room is the best preserved and the most interesting as it contains the one original wood mantel piece and one of the two old doors. The trim woodwork, with the exception of the south door casing, is original. The mantel is nicely designed and worthy of careful preservation. While portions of the old baseboard were present when the recent reconstruction began, they were so damaged and rotted ^{that} all had to be replaced. The new base faithfully follows the original pattern as do the new casings which were placed on two of the doors.

The original flooring of the entire building has long since disappeared and a maple floor is much in evidence in the center and west rooms.

In the east room, this has been replaced with a finish floor of wide pine boards secured with old cut iron nails. The old timber floor beams were removed at some previous time and modern sawn joists now occupy their place.

On the exterior, the building is much out of line due to its having been sided and trimmed not many years ago while it was in its sagged and settled position. It must also have received new sash and frames at that time and modern shutters. There is now no siding or sash which appear old. The hardware of the doors and shutters is mostly modern. With one exception, the exterior doors are modern stock type. The original partitions which divided the east and west rooms at about their center have long been removed. There is a small bath room separated from the center room with a beaded ceiling partition.

3. Recommendations for Restoration.

In the event of a restoration program, this building might be put back as it was in 1862 when it contained three sets of quarters for officers. It might then be furnished and would form an interesting adjunct to the permanent museum. This would mean that the partition around the bathroom together with the plumbing fixtures would be removed. It would also mean the replacing of one partition and doorway in each of the end quarters and short partitions to form the old entry of the West quarters.

There are but two doors in the building which appear to be old. The remaining five should be replaced with special doors made to match the old ones. The window trim now consists of plain casings and the base of plain boards except in the east room and entry. The finish trim should all be made to conform to that now installed in these two rooms. Some of the window frames contain sash pulleys and weights. I would suggest that all of the frames be removed and reset to a line. The pulley frames should be replaced with the plain type and old fashioned wood sash dogs supplied which would serve to lock and also to hold the sash in the open position.

The finish floor of wide pine boards in the east room and entry should be continued in the remainder of the building. The present maple floor in that part is at the proper level

to serve as the sub floor. In regard to the roofing, when it is replaced, I would suggest using the Williamsburg asbestos-cement shingle.

The matter of hardware is an important one. There is but one piece of the original hardware in the building and a restoration should include strap hinges, case locks, and shutter fasteners all made of hand forged iron. The shutters themselves are not suitable and should be replaced with wood blinds which, of course, should be hung on strap hinges to operate.

V. THE STONE OFFICERS QUARTERS. (State Park Comm. No. 7)

1. Historical.

"The Old Stone Quarters", as this building is almost affectionately called, has stood on the brow of the hill overlooking the village and straits of Mackinac for 136 years. Of all the buildings comprising Fort Mackinac as we know it, the Stone Quarters alone was partly built by the British. That it is in the best condition of any of the building speaks volumes for its method and materials of construction, but all credit should not go to those who laid its foundations. The quarters was left for the Americans to complete which was very probably done in the year 1798.

That this building was one of the dreams of Patt Sinclair from the very first, is shown by his continual reference to it in his early correspondence. We find him writing to Brehm^{*57} at Quebec on the third day after he arrived at Michilimackinac that, "The upper ground for officers and soldiers barracks—would be a safe and easy disposition of the whole change at this post." He promises Haldimand^{*58} a little later that, "The foundation of the officer's Barracks will be laid in a few days." It probably was, but when Sinclair gave up the command in September of 1782 the building was not more than half finished. He came the order, on the following April, to stop all construction work so that we find Capt. Gother

*57 Sinclair to Brehm, Oct. 7, 1779, Mich. Hist. Colls. IX, 525.

*58 Sinclair to Haldimand, July 6, 1781, Mich. Hist. Colls. X, 495.

^{*59}
Mann of the Royal Engineers in his report on all forts and stations in December of 1788 saying, "There is a pile of building of masonry intended for Officers Barracks about half finished: the walls are nearly raised to third proper height and the window frames put in, but the roof, floor, etc. are wanting." There are records of subsequent reports made on Fort Mackinac up to the date of the American occupation following Jay's Treaty in 1796, all of which confirm the extent of completion of the building. When Major Burbeck occupied the fort with his two companies of American militia, he received an inventory of buildings from the British commander.^{*60} It has this to say concerning the officers quarters: "A range of stone buildings intended for barracks have been carried up as high as the second story—Walls are tolerable good order. Sleepers of the second floor and window frames are decayed. Roof has not been put on or the sash placed."

The rather discouraging outlook of a ruinous fort which greeted the new occupants of the island was met by a determination that—"This important Fort must be secured to the Nation by a new work."^{*61} Mackinac was so highly prized by the Americans that the Commander in Chief of the American Forces, General Wilkinson himself, was sent out in the summer of 1797 to make an inspection and report. The result was a building program instituted the following year, one of the first fruits of which was the completed Stone Officers' Quarters. Patt Sinclair's dream was realized, so much so that in 1800 Uriah Tracy enthusiastically says in his report, "The fort contains one stone barracks for the use of the officers—equal if not superior to any building of the kind in the United States."^{*62}

There is no further account of the Stone Officers Quarters in any of the available records, which speaks well for its sturdy construction—for the reports were mainly a compilation of complaints. About the year 1804, two rain water cisterns which were located in the northeast and northwest portions of the basement were removed. In common with several of

*59 Report of Gother Mann, Dec. 6, 1788, Mich. Hist. Colls. Vol. III, P. 33.

*60 Lieut. Foster to Major Burbeck, Sept. 1, 1796, Files of the War Dept.

*61 In report of Gen. Wilkinson to Sec. of War, Sept. 9, 1797, Files of the War Dept.

*62 Uriah Tracy to Sec. of War, Dec. 20, 1800, Mich. Hist. Colls. Vol. III, P. 33.

The other buildings, the Stone Quarters was equipped with these reservoirs for the collection and storage of water. The cisterns caused dampness in the rooms adjacent which was no doubt the cause of their removal altho dampness seems to have been a frequent complaint.^{*53}

It was so much complained of that the Park Commission during this same year caused a trench to be opened up around the east, north, and west sides of the building which trench is still much in evidence.

In the year 1929 the basement was remodeled for the use of a Tea Room concession. An opening was cut between the two sets of quarters, both on the first floor and in the basement, not however, without a great deal of difficulty. The old lime mortar had to be chiseled from around each stone and the walls were found to be 26 and 56 inches thick respectively. A quarry tile floor was laid in place of the old wood floor in the east room and the wood floors in the other rooms were renewed. The fireplaces, which had been sealed since before 1878, were opened up in the east and west chimneys. The old andirons and cranes were found intact and were put back in use. It would be interesting to know if the center chimney, which is nearly eight feet thick in the basement, also contains sealed-up fireplaces. Some wood posts and beams were added in the east part of the basement to support the old floor timbers which had begun to sag.

There is a drawing in the files of the Mackinac Island State Park Commission which was made in 1875 and which shows out-houses attached to the lower floor of the building on the harbor side. These were replaced with bathrooms on the first floor—probably when the fort water system was installed in 1881. The enclosures remained however, and are shown on pictures as recent as 1908. They were used as coal sheds and were entirely removed before the year 1925.

^{*53} According to Mrs. Van Allen Webster, local resident, who occupied the west quarters with Major Webster in 1878, the cisterns were not used at that time because of the dampness. The basement rooms were used as kitchens, dining rooms and help's quarters.

Lieut. Kelton in his much referred to book on Fort Mackinac^{*64} states that the windows of the Stone Officers Quarters were once protected with iron bars. A close examination of the masonry fails to detect any trace of such prison like appurtenances.

2. Present Condition.

The Stone Quarters is in very good condition. Its masonry is much better preserved than that of the block houses and ramparts. Its construction is also much better. There are squared and bonded stones at the corners and the interior of the walls is not a loose mass of rubble but consists of coursed ashlar. The exterior walls are 25 inches thick above the first floor and 38 inches below. They were evidently intended to be proof against the musketry of the day. The windows are protected with wood blinds on the exterior and solid shutters within. The roof is covered with 1/8 inch asbestos cement shingles colored red which shingles date (probably) from 1929 when the building was so extensively overhauled.

The whole structure has the appearance of solidity and permanence. It is one of the best proportioned buildings comprising the fort group. Its massive stone chimneys with their plastered brick cowls tend to dwarf the scale of the 105 foot building in comparison with the other buildings seen from the parade ground. The blinds at the windows are well designed and, while probably not original, are equipped with the old handmade strap hinges and shutter dogs. The entrance doors date from 1828^{*65} but are well done in good accord with the building.

In short the Stone Quarters is a fitting monument to the builder of Fort Mackinac, Lieut. Governor Patt Sinclair, who in 1781 conceived it^{upon} so ample a scale. Because it was built so well, it has come down to us thru 184 years as the only complete building included in the original British plan which remains to us on Mackinac Island.

*64 Annals of Fort Mackinac by Lieut. Dwight Kelton, first edition published in 1881.

*65 New doors in the Stone Quarters were recommended by Capt. Alex. Thompson, U.S.A., then at Washington in his report dated January 5, 1827. This report approved and ordered executed in March 1827. From the Files of the War Department at Washington, D.C.

On the interior, few changes have been made from the original plan of the building. As noted before, a bathroom has been added on the first floor and the coal sheds removed from the harbor side. In conformity with its present use as a Tea Room on the ground floor and as the Fort Museum above, the stairways have been floored over and the two sets of quarters joined by doorways on each floor. Also, at some previous time, the two original stairways were reversed in direction and a third stair was added in the west portion. The trim and doors seem to be original and are nicely designed. There are several wood mantels ^{and} which might aspire to the same distinction in the story. The old floors have all been replaced with the ugly, if practical, factory type maple laid over the worn boards. The window sash are old type without weights and are held nicely open or closed with wood sash dogs. The old hand wrought hardware has partially been replaced with cheap case locks and white knobs.

There is one noticeable defect in the ^{use} structure of the building which should be remedied. The floor of the east portion is supported by wood timbers with the considerable span of 22 feet. There is a partition load in the upper story entirely supported on one of the timbers. The result is a badly sagged floor.

3. Recommendations for Restoration.

The restoration of the Stone Officers Quarters would be a simple operation for there is little to be done. I believe the present use of the building as a Tea Room and Museum is very much in keeping with the restoration idea. One thing which I would suggest would be to include the west room of the ground story as part of the museum. In that event, it could be furnished as was the old kitchen, the brick cistern rebuilt and partitioned off, and the stairs reconstructed and restored to usefulness. The fireplace already has the old grate and andirons. In the event that this room is rehabilitated, the posts and beam should be removed and the floor above supported from the attic.

The floor over the east room of the ground story is also weak and overloaded. I would suggest in both of these cases that a wood truss be constructed in the attic bearing upon the walls and securely tied together. There should be an iron shoe at the top supporting a rod which extends down thru the partition below and is washered into the floor beam. A turn-buckle in the attic would operate to transfer the floor load from the sagged beams to the outside walls.

A restoration should include new door hardware thru out. This should consist of surface mounted case locks on both interior and exterior doors in black iron with solid brass knobs. The doors themselves are, I believe, original with the exception of those on the exterior and two or three inside doors. The latter should be replaced with duplicates of the old work.

As to the flooring, I would recommend that the maple be taken up and a finish floor of wide boards substituted. Because of the excessive traffic thru the building, this should be of second grade yellow pine or oak in random width boards of 6, 8 and 10 inch dimensions. They should be edge matched and blind nailed and further secured with face nailing, using the old fashioned cut iron nails. For a finish, I would suggest a weathered brown stain.

VI THE FORT HOSPITAL (State Park Comm. No.6)

1. Historical.

This log building was not built until the final acquisition of Fort Mackinac by the Americans after the year 1815. It occupies, however, the approximate site of Patt Sinclair's Provision Store House which he Bret over on the ice from old Fort Michilimackinac on the south shore ^{*66} in 1780.

*66 Sinclair to Powell, June 6, 1781, Mich. Hist. Colls. XIX, 538.

The Provision Store is clearly shown on the sketch of the fort which accompanied Lieut.
^{*67}
 Hockings report in 1782 and it is described in the British inventory of buildings made
 14 years later, as being, "A log building, 115 feet long by 25 feet wide, two stories high,
^{*68}
 in good order."

The actual date of construction of the present hospital appears to 1828. At least
 it was rebuilt in this year as shown by an inspection report ^{*69} in the Inspector General's
 office which says, "The hospital [burnt down during the last winter] will soon be rebuilt."
 This report is dated June 1828. The extent of the fire is not indicated but even before
 this disaster a new hospital was contemplated. It was one of the buildings authorized by
 the Sec. of War to Capt. Alexander R. Thompson in March of 1827 when he orders, "Go ahead
^{*70}
 on your present plan" of rebuilding the Fort. That this order was carried out is shown
^{*71}
 by a letter of Major Voss written toward the close of 1828 which enumerates the hospital
 as one of the buildings completed during the extensive construction program of that year.

^{*72}
 Edwin O. Wood in his book, "Historic Mackinac" names 1817 as the building date for
 the hospital. This may have been correct for the structure which burned but I have not
 been able to confirm it. Lieut. Kelton in his "Annals of Fort Mackinac" ^{*73} names 1828 and I
 am inclined to think this ^{is} nearer correct. The building is clearly shown on a birds-eye
^{*74}
 view perspective drawing made about 1842 for commanding officer Scott.

- *67 Report of R. Hockings, Engineer, Sept. 20, 1782, Mich. Hist. Colls. X, 641.
- *68 Burbeck Report to Gen. Wayne, Sept. 6, 1796 in Files of War Dept.
- *69 Inspection Report of June 1828 in Files of Inspector Gen. Office, War Dept., Washington.
- *70 Sec. of War to Capt. Alex. R. Thompson, March 1827, in files of War Department.
- *71 Maj. Josiah Voss to Sec. of War, Dec. 16, 1828 in Files of War Dept.
- *72 Vol. I, Historic Mackinac by E. O. Wood, Map opposite Page 578—shows date of 1817.
- *73 Annals of Fort Mackinac by Lieut. Dwight Kelton, 1st Edition Published in 1881.
- *74 Drawing by W. Brenshute, private, Company I, 5th Reg. in possession of Eleanor Temple,
 16 Washington Avenue, Muskegon, Michigan.

It is likely that after the fire the hospital was rebuilt along the lines of the former building. It may be that portions of the present structure date back beyond the year of 1828. We find a brief reference to the old building in Myer's book on the life of Beaumont.^{*75} On page 86 he says that Dr. Beaumont occupied the east quarters of the Stone Barracks in 1828 and took charge of "the small one story frame hospital."

In all probability the present building was used after Dr. Beaumont's time as the Post Hospital until 1858 when the so-called Surgeon's Hospital was built on the edge of the cliff to the east of the fort enclosure. It was found that the old building having only one ward was overcrowded and poorly arranged to care for contagious cases. After this the building was used as the quarter masters store^{*76} up until the time of the final evacuation of the fort in 1895. From then on it stood vacant until 1923, when it was rehabilitated and restored to its former purpose. An organization of Mackinac Island people has equipped the old building with modern surgical appliances and it stands ready to once more faithfully discharge the purpose for which it was built.

2. Present Condition.

The old Post Hospital is in poor condition as far as the wooden sills and joists are concerned. It was not possible to include it in the emergency reconstruction program of 1934 due to a lack of time. An examination of the structure shows that the sills are all rotted out as are also portions of the lower tier of timbers of which the exterior walls are built. The joist timbers of the south central portion are resting on the ground the consequence being that they are badly decayed. Those joists which occur above the small north basement were replaced in 1908 according to the records of the State Park Commission. Also new floors were laid thru out which are of narrow width fir. The old sick ward is now the operating room and its floor is covered with linoleum.

* Life and Letters of Wm. Beaumont by Jesse S. Myer.

*76 Authority of Joseph Leggett, Mackinac Island resident who served witharrison 1857 to 1860.

As to the upper part of the building, the hospital and nurse's quarters, it is in a good condition. The nurse's quarters and public waiting room are in an addition to the old building which was built on toward the south in the year 1923. It is two stories high but very well done in such a way that it adds to an already pleasing design. A large stone chimney which was built toward the north to care for the required heating plant is likewise very well done. Altho there is a total lack of mouldings and elaborate trim work on the exterior, the old Fort Hospital is one of the most charming of the fort buildings.

The construction of the old part of the building, as mentioned above, is of squared timbers pinned together vertically with wood dowels. The roof is substantially constructed with pinned timber cross frames every four feet. The siding consists of 1 inch boards 10 inches wide with beveled 2 inch laps. There is no basement or air space below the floor except under the north end. This small excavation contains the heating plant and formerly had a plastered brick cistern in the east corner. The building is plastered and contains the original trim and doors and, for the most part, the original hardware which is of almost interesting design and worthy of reproduction. The old hospital is as interesting within as without.

The roof is covered with unstained wood shingles in a good state of preservation. The blinds are modern and hung on new hardware. The porches are not original and were added when the building was altered for its present use.

5. Recommendations for Restoration.

In case a restoration of Fort Mackinac is inaugurated, there will be little necessary as regards the old Hospital. The rooms in the main portion are all as originally built, the only change being the use to which they are put. The west reception room is now a diet kitchen and the old linen room behind it is serving, in addition to that use, as a bath room.

There was formerly a small chimney on the central part of the building which was carried on the partition between the old linen room and ward. It served a heating stove in the later room. As it was not structural and added nothing to the appearance of the building, I believe it should not be replaced.

The underpinning of the hospital must be the first consideration of any restoration program. The building must be raised and leveled, new sills placed, and new joists installed under the south central portion. The stone foundation walls must be repaired and brought up above the grade line. Vent openings should be placed to prevent dry rot under the unexcavated portion.

There should be new hand wrought hardware placed upon the outside blinds—to consist of strap hinges and shutter dogs. Two of the interior doors have lost their old iron handles and latches. These should be restored to match the old work.

The floors are not true to type but, where cleanliness is so important, I believe the present stained fir in the private rooms and battleship linoleum in the service and operating rooms should be retained. ^{THE WINDOW SASH APPEAR TO BE ORIGINAL BUT THEY SHOULD BE CAREFULLY REPAIRED.} Some of the lower rails and meeting rails are found to be badly rotted. They are equipped with the old wood sash dogs, so desirable in this particular building.

When the roof shingles are replaced, I suggest using the same asbestos cement type recommended for the other fort buildings.

The south addition which of course is not original should be retained for it renders the building practical for its modern purpose. It is well designed but I would suggest a door more nearly matching the old work for the entrance and with the proper hardware. The modern bevel siding used upon the south and west sides should be replaced with 1 inch rough sawed material specially made to conform to the old work.

The modern plumbing and heating plant, which again are necessary for the functioning of the building, should be retained.

VII FORT OFFICERS QUARTERS (State Park Comm. No. 1 & 2)

1. Historical

The two buildings known as Officers Quarters Number 1 and 2 and located North west of the Fort enclosure have little historical significance. They each originally contained double quarters and were built to satisfy the insistant clamor of the two company post for additional officer accomodations. The date of their erection is agreed upon by both Wood^{*77} and Bailey^{*78} as being 1876. This date is confirmed by local residents, one of whom occupied the east side of number 2 when her husband, Major Webb, commanded the post.^{*79}

Some time after the army abandoned the post in 1895 the two sets of officers quarters were remodeled into single cottages and are now used for private occupation.

2. Present Conditions.

The two buildings are of light frame construction with narrow siding outside, plastered walls inside, and red asphalt shingle roofs. They are in good general condition. However, the supports for the first floor over the unexcavated portions are in need of attention. They originally consisted of cedar posts which have rotted off in several cases, allowing the floors to sag. Some work of a temporary nature was done under quarters number 2 this past summer in the way of shoring up the front hall.

3. Recommendations for Reconstruction.

I believe that the two buildings should be carefully maintained but no attempt should be made to restore them to their original condition. They are outside of the fort enclosure and as cottages they serve a definite purpose in connection with the administration of the Mackinac Island State Park.

*77 Historical Mackinac, a 2 Volumn work by Edwin O. Wood, published in 1918.

*78 John R. Bailey wrote a history called "Mackinac. Published in 1895.

*79 Per Mrs. Rose Webb, Mackinac Island, Michigan.

The matter of the sagging floors should be remedied by the construction of stone piers to support new lines of wood girders. The girders should be arranged to entirely supplant the old cedar posts.

VIII OFFICERS QUARTERS No. 3. (State Park Comm. No. 3)

1. Historical.

This building was constructed according to one authority in 1835 while Fort Mackinac was still a one company post. It variously housed the commandant of the Fort and the company commanders. Like the officers quarters number 1 and 2, it was built double. In 1842 the west side was occupied by the garrison priest. It seems probable that the above building date is correct and that it was part of the building program for which Congress appropriated \$10,000 in the year 1834. We know definitely that it was built before 1842 as it is distinctly shown on the birds-eye view drawing^{*81} of the fort made that year for Commanding officer, Martin Scott.^{*82}

The quarters is situated on the hill back of the flag staff overlooking the parade ground. Like quarters number 1 and 2, it has been remodeled into a single cottage, with several additions having been added at various times.

2. Present Condition.

Quarters number 3 is a frame building having heavy timber sills and framing. There is a basement under the whole area and an old plastered brick cistern in one corner. The condition of the building is good except that floors have sagged especially in the northeast addition. The roof is covered with red asphalt shingles.

3. Recommendations for Restoration.

As suggested in the case of Officers Quarters number 1 and 2, I believe that this building should be carefully maintained and that the floors should be leveled in a permanent manner but that it can be used to better advantage as a cottage in connection with

*80. Annals of Fort Mackinac by Lieut. Dwight Kelton. Published 1881.

*81. Drawing by W. Brenshute, privt., Com. I., 5 Reg. about 1842. Now in possession of Eleanor Temple, 16 Washington Ave., Muskegon, Michigan.

*82. This disproves the date of 1864 given by E.O. Wood in his Historic Mackinac Page 578.
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the administration of the Park affairs than as a restored fort officers quarters. It would seem that the rehabilitation of the officers quarters contained in the two buildings on the parade ground facing the bay would place sufficient emphasis on this feature of the fort.

IX. SCHOOL HOUSE (State Park Comm. No. 61)

1. Historical.

The School House located on the upper level with Officers Quarters number 3, was the last building constructed while the post was garrisoned. The date of its construction is best placed ^{AS} 1878 to '79 which is the date given by Kelton. ^{*83} The testimony of an old army man who was quartered at Fort Mackinac in 1879 ^{*84} that he painted the School building just as it was completed that spring confirms this information.

I believe that this building was built as a school house for the children belonging to the garrison and officers families. It was variously used as a reading room and library. There was an addition placed on the rear in the form of a fire proof vault at the time when the building was adapted to the Park Commission office. There was also a stone chimney added with a well designed stone fireplace and some plumbing was put into one of the old coat rooms.

2. Present Condition.

The School House is a light frame building without a basement but having an ample open space below the joists for ventilation. It is in good condition altho suffering from the ^{COMMON} complaint of fort buildings, that of uneven floors. The roof is of red asphalt shingles and the floor is covered with cork carpet.

3. Recommendations for Restoration.

If deemed advisable, the School House could be easily reconverted to that purpose. It would be mainly a matter of equipment. However, standing as it does in a central and commanding position among the fort buildings and being easily accessible, it serves as an

^{*83} Lieut. D. Kelton in his Annals of Mackinac given the date as 1878.

^{*84} Sarg. J. Leggett of Mackinac Island, ^{PORT} was garrisoned at the Fort from May 1879 to Oct. 1880.

excellent administration office and center of information. I recommend that it be continued in its present capacity.

The matter of underpinning should be corrected. This will mean a series of new stone piers to replace the old cedar posts thru the center of the building.

The roof, in common with most of the other fort buildings, should have its shingles replaced with the Williamsburg shingle recommended for the Guard ^{House} and Canteen.

The trim hardware on three inside doors should receive attention. Here the old latches are in bad condition. They should be replaced with new morticed sets and the same white china knobs⁸⁶ which are typical of the period, replaced. On the front entrance door, the ornamental set now in use should be discarded and a black iron case lock substituted having solid brass knobs.

X SOLDIERS BARRACKS (Park Comm. No. 15)

1. Historical.

When Patt Sinclair located his log buildings inside the pickets of Fort Mackinac he established them in positions which they mostly hold today, even tho many of them have been torn or burned down several times. The earliest plan of the fort which is available,⁸⁵ that which accompanied Hocking's Report in 1782, shows the soldier's barracks virtually where it stands at present. The plan was made in the early spring ^{or} 1781 and carried a notation that the barracks "will be finished in June if Glass arrives." From this date till the British evacuation in October of 1796 we find various inspection reports which agree as to the "ruinous state of the Soldiers Barracks."⁸⁶

As with other buildings after the American occupation, it is probable that the barracks was rebuilt during the program of 1798 following General Wilkinson's visit. At least it was repaired to such an extent that Uriah Tracy was able to say in 1800, "The Fort has a—good Guard House and barracks for soldiers."⁸⁷

*85 Plan made under Sinclair early in 1781. Mich. Hist. Colls. L-641.
 *86 See report of Gother Mann, Dec. 6, 1788. Mich. Hist. Colls. XII, 457.
 See report of Capt. Doyle, Sept. 6, 1793. Mich. Hist. Colls. XIII, 281.
 *87 Gen. Wilkinson was Commander in chief of American Forces. He inspected the Fort in Aug. 1797.

It may be assumed that Winclair's old barracks building had been burned or torn down before the date of 1825 when we find Capt. Wm. Hoffman recommending that the old site be abandoned and a new work constructed on the lower ground.^{*89} At any rate, we learn from Major Voss' report in 1828 that a new soldiers quarters has been built but he complains that the one story building, "has bunks for 50 men only."^{*90}

In 1842 there was a perspective drawing made for Capt. Martin Scott then in command of the Fort. This without doubt shows the identical barracks mentioned by Major Voss above. It is a one story building longer than the present work and with a small addition to the West. Being so different in size and plan, I conclude that it was the barracks which Dr. Bailey in his book "Mackinac" says was destroyed by fire. This happened during the year 1851 or ^{*91}1852.^{*92}

I believe that the present soldiers barracks was constructed shortly after this time—Kelton says 1859 and in Wood's Historical Mackinac the date is placed at 1856.^{*93} This building was one story high and accommodated but one company. It was plastered on the inside as evidenced by some of the old lath still visible in the basement stairway and was probably built over the old foundation but not including the western most addition mentioned above.^{*94} In 1875 when Fort Mackinac was a two Company Post, a second story was added to the barracks and a continuous porch one story high existed across the building on the front toward the parade ground. There were then accommodations for two full companies with mess rooms and kitchens complete in the north wing, each company occupying its own floor. A photograph taken later, about 1889, shows the porch with a flat, railinged roof above which is its condition today. The porch however is new, having been carefully restored during 1933.^{*95}

- *89 Capt. Wm. Hoffman to Sec. of War, 1825 in Files of War Dept.
- *90 Maj. Josiah Voss to Sec. of War, Dec. 15, 1828 in Files of War Dept.
- *91 Drawing W. Brenshute, privt. Com. 1. 5th Reg. about 1842, in possession of Eleanor Temple, 16 Washington Ave., Muskegon, Michigan.
- *92 Mackinac, by Dr. John R. Bailey, published in 1895.
- *93 Per Mr. H. Frank Emery of Detroit, a student of Mackinac History.
- *94 In Annals of Fort Mackinac by Dwight Kelton, 1st Edition 1881.
- *95 Dr. Bailey says in his book "Mackinac" that the date was 1876-7. An etching in "Island of Mackinac" by J. Dusturnell, pub. in Philadelphia in May 1875 shows the two story barracks which fixes the date of the addition at least before 1875.

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There is a large center room on the second floor of the soldiers barracks which has a coved plaster ceiling. It was formerly used as a chapel on Sundays and a barrack room the remainder of the time. The end rooms on both floors were used for Sargent's quarters.

2. Present Condition.

The Soldiers Barracks building, except for the underpinning is in good condition. It has a heavy morticed timber frame with lighter walls. It is sided on the exterior and has 1 by 3 beaded ceiling on the inside walls. The roof is of wood shingles. There is a very small basement under the southeast corner which contains an old brick cistern.

At the west end of the building and also on the north, the sills and floor joists are resting directly on the ground and it is safe to say they are badly rotted. There was some work done in the way of new sills during ¹⁹³³ but I am informed it was in no way completed. There was not sufficient time during the reconstruction program of 1934 to attempt anything on this building.

During 1933, the soldiers barracks was developed as a source of income in connection with the administration of the State Park Reservation. The large barrack rooms on each floor were set aside as public exhibition space and the north wing together with the old sargents quarters at each side was divided up into rentable apartments. The public space in the building now comprises 42 1/2 percent of the total floor area.

3. Recommendations for Restoration.

If a program of restoration is adopted, it would seem that the barracks where the garrison was formerly quartered should be one of the buildings restored. The exterior is probably just as the soldiers left it except for six window and door openings in the north wing which have been added. The interior would have to be altered as far as many of the partitions are concerned. Some of the plumbing would be removed. In the remodeling, nothing was done which would prohibit replacing the rooms as they were except that some simple wood posts in the first story were taken out of the north wing. As the building is not plastered,

the walls were not injured.

The joists and sills of the under construction should received early attention. Especially under the north and west portions, they will undoubtedly be found decayed. The area below them should be excavated and adequate provision made to ventilate it.

As to the roof, the Williamsburg shingle should supplant the wood covering when this part of the building is renewed. If the building is restored, care should be used in the selection of hardware and light fixtures as these features are very important.

XI COTTAGE (Bath House) (State Park Comm. No. 17)

This small building located near the north Sally-Port, was built about 1885 as the post bath house.^{*96} Kelton says it was built on the site of the old Sutlers Store.

It is a light frame building without basement but having a well ventilated space below the joists. It is in good condition. During 1933 it received a small addition on the rear and a relocation of its center partition.

The building is fitted up as a small cottage in connection with the administration of the State Park. I believe in this manner it fulfills a better purpose than might otherwise be found for it.

In connection with other fort buildings, the red asphalt roof should, in the event of a general restoration, be replaced with the Williamsburg shingle advocated before.

XII REST ROOM (State Park Comm. No. 33)

This a small frame building next to Cottage 17 and built in recent years. It is in good condition. The roof is covered with red asphalt shingles. The ^{INSTALLATION} addition of an additional closet fixture in the women's room is a needed improvement.

XIII QUARTERMASTERS STORE (State Park Comm. No. 11)

This is a long narrow frame building south of Cottage 17 and was built, according to Wood's^{*97} "Historic Mackinac," in the year 1867.

*96 Per Dwight Kelton in his book "Annals of Fort Mackinac," 1891 Edition.

*97 Historic Mackinac in 2 Volumes by E.O.Wood. See Map on page 578. Vol. I.

It is in good condition, having received a new floor with new joists in 1933. The new floor is 9 inches above the level of the former. The old double entrance doors, necessary when it was a store house, are still doing duty. The roof is of the same red shingles as many of the other buildings. The space below the floor is ventilated. The quartermaster's store house is still being used to house fort supplies, altho not the regulation clothing and blankets of army days.

IV POST HEADQUARTERS (State Park Comm. No. 4)

1. Historical

This is a two story frame cottage facing the lane between the two sally-ports and overlooking the parade ground. ^{*98} Wood says that it was built in 1853. The drawing made by ^{*99} W. Brenschute about 1842 shows that this building, as well as the two on the south (Qtn. Store and Cottage 17), was built on the site of a long one story building occupied by the carpenter shop, bake shop, commissary store, etc. The building still has the separate entrance doors which served the commanding officer and adjutant's office on the south and the quartermaster on the north. The latter office was connected by a passage with the store house beyond.

2. Present Condition.

The headquarters building is in good general condition but for the common complaint. The under supports of the floor at the rear have rotted out and it has badly sagged. The ground here rises sharply and it is probable that the joists are resting on the earth. The building was altered during the construction program of 1933 when a brick fireplace was built using the old chimney. The flooring downstairs was renewed and the plaster patched in places with plaster board. A porch which formerly extended clear across the rear was removed at some earlier time.

^{*98} Historic Mackinac in two volumes by E.C. Wood, See Map on page 67.
^{*99} Birds-eye view perspective drawing made by W. Brenschute for Capt. J. B. Smith, 1842. Now in possession of Eleanor Temple, 16 Washington Ave., Mackinac Island, Mich.

The second story still has its original floor of wide pine boards where there are some to the astonishing width of 28 inches. They are nicely worn and should be carefully retained. The old steep stair case is interesting.

The building has a bath room occupying part of the former passage to the store house and is used as a rentable cottage.

5. Recommendations for Restoration.

Should a restoration program be instituted there has been little done to the old Post Headquarters which would prevent its being returned to its former appearance. A door between the two rooms at the rear and the door leading to the bath room are the only structural changes beyond that of the fireplace mentioned above.

The matter of the weakened underpinning should be remedied. It will no doubt be found necessary to renew the sill along the rear side and perhaps some of the floor joists under that portion.

The plaster board patching should be replaced with plaster and the flooring in the first story should be changed. I would suggest the 8 and 10 inch face nailed boards as recommended for the Sioux Officers Quarters.

It seems to me that this building, furnished and fitted up as when it was the Post Headquarters, would be a very desirable feature of Fort Mackinac.

IV. COMMISSARY (State Park Comm. No. 18)

1. Historical.

The commissary store house is a narrow one story frame building near the south end of the fort. It consists of a warehouse with two small rooms at the front which were formerly the commissary offices. At the side are double doors for the handling of stores which once opened into the loading dock. The commissary building was constructed in 1877 following the demolition of the old British Powder Magazine on the same site.

*100 Wood in his "Historic Mackinac", Vol. I, Page 678 says 1878 but local residents and Dr. Bailey in his book "Mackinac" both agree on the date given.

It was built over a portion of the magazine excavation which now forms a basement under the east end of the building. The stone from the old walls was used to build the new foundations.

The old British Powder Magazine was an interesting structure and it is regrettable that it has not survived. It was one of the first buildings attempted by Gov. Patt Sinclair and is mentioned in his letter to Brehm on Oct. 7, 1779^{*101}—written four days after his arrival from Quebec. Like the stone Officers Quarters, the magazine was well constructed of bonded masonry for we learn from an eye witness^{*102} that it was necessary to use dynamite in wrecking the walls. Dr. Bailey speaks of the very thick walls and says that the roof was formed of three consecutive stone arches with sod on top to render it bomb proof. Above that was a hip roof of wood with shingle covering. From Burbeck's Report of Sept. 6, 1796 we obtain the interesting information that the Powder Magazine was, "Of stone—32¹/₂ feet long by 23¹/₂ feet wide with a stone arch. In very good order excepting the floor. Will hold 1000 bbls. of gun powder."^{*103}

The magazine was well built but poorly designed. All of the available inspection reports during the American occupation speak of the incurable dampness of the walls. There was evidently no hollow space to stop the condensation and altho many expedients were tried^{*104} this fault eventually caused its demolition. During the last few years of its existence it served the plebian purpose of a coal bin. From the book "Island of Mackinac," we learn^{*105} that in 1875 the powder and cartridges were stored in the basement of the east block house.

- *101 Sinclair to Brehm, Oct. 7, 1779, Mich. Hist. Colls. IX, 523. Speaking of limestone he says, "A powder magazine should at all events be constructed with it and rendered bomb proof."
- *102 Mrs. Van Allen Webster, Mackinac Island resident.
- *103 In "Mackinac" by Dr. John R. Bailey, 1903 Edition.
- *104 Burbeck Report to Gen. Wayne, Sept. 6, 1796. In files of the War Department.
- *105 Report to Inspector General dated July 25, 1875 suggests lining walls with matched planks. In files of War Dept.
- *106 Island of Mackinac by F. Dasturnell, published May 1875.

This, by the way, accounts for the small iron bared opening in the east stone wall of that structure—it was placed there before 1875 as a ventilator.

The best picture I have been able to find of the old stone magazine is that in the Brenschute drawing^{*107} made about 1842. This shows a low building with an arched door and hip roof located close in to the embankment and having a stone guard wall flanking it on three sides.

There is an old stone drain coming out from under the ramparts to the east of the south sally-port. This was repaired in 1963 when they found that it goes back under the parade ground serving a surface drain and that there is a branch leading over toward the old magazine. It is very possible that this once served as the magazine drain.

2. Present Condition.

The commissary store is in good condition. It is built high above the ground for the convenience of wagon loading and the space below is well ventilated. The roof is covered with wood shingles.

The old stair to the basement has been removed from the southeast corner. Some plumbing in one of the front rooms and a brick chimney for the new boiler complete the list of changes which have been made to the building. It is used as a general equipment store house.

5. Recommendations for Restoration.

A restoration of this building would be a simple procedure. About the only change I could recommend would be the replacement of the loading dock on the south side. It is understood with regard to the roofing that the shingles should be changed to the permanent type recommended for other buildings.

FBI SURGEONS HOSPITAL (State Park Comm. No. 12)

1. Historical:

This two story frame building on the upper level west of the fort enclosure was built to meet the demand for more bed space and greater isolation than the old Fort Hospital

*107 Perspective drawing made about 1842 by W. Brenschute, now in possession of Eleanor Temple, 16 Washington Ave., Eastrogen, Mich.

afforded. Both Kelton and Bailey agree on the date of its erection as being 1886. Thereafter it had the distinction of being the "Post Hospital" and the older building degenerated into a quarter master's store house.

During 1929 a 12 by 40 foot addition was put on the rear of the structure and considerable work was done on the interior in the way of partitions and plumbing. The building was transformed into living quarters and now contains four rentable apartments.

2. Present Condition.

The Surgeons Hospital has a heavy timber frame, is sided on the exterior and plastered within. There is no basement but a well ventilated air space below the floor. A heating plant has been placed in an old root cellar at the rear. The general condition of the building is good altho both the upper and lower porches across the front are dangerously weak. The lower porch was temporarily strengthened during the 1934 reconstruction program. Furthermore, there is but a single thickness of beaded ceiling for floor boards and it is consequently weak. This should be repaired and a finish floor placed above it. The roof is covered with red asphalt shingles which are subject to the same recommendation as with the other buildings.

3. Recommendation for Restoration.

To restore this building to its former purpose as a hospital, I believe would be inadvisable. It is beyond the limits of the Fort enclosure and there is already a post hospital which is very attractive and well fitted out. So much has been done in the way of alterations and additions at the rear that I do not feel that the expense would be warranted by the result.

III HOSPITAL STEWARDS BUILDING. (State Park Comm. No. 14)

This is a frame two story building without basement located just north of the Surgeons Hospital. It was built, Wood says in 1867, as the name indicates--a place for the hospital attendants.

The building has a well ventilated air space below it and is in good condition. The roof is the same red asphalt as the hospital and subject to the same recommendation.

In regard to a restoration of this building, my ideas as expressed for the Surgeon's Hospital will apply equally here.

WELL AND WELL

There was formerly a very deep well of excellent water sunk in the limestone rock just to the south of the Commissary Store House. For some reason it became contaminated and was filled in but a depression in the ground which until recently was evident, undoubtedly indicates its old location.

The well is shown on the earliest map of the Fort available, that of Patt Sinclair made in 1791. ^{*100} Upon it he has marked, "Will be dug out 30 feet more in the course of the summer." From then on, it is often mentioned in succeeding inspection reports. Capt. Gother ^{*105} Mann in 1793 says, "There is a very good well sunk in the rock." Uriah Tracy ^{*110} in describing the Fort to the Secretary of War after the American acquisition in 1800 says, "It contains a well of never failing water,-----."

During the American occupation of the fort between 1800 and 1813, something happened to the Fort Well. Either it became contaminated and was allowed to cave in or it was deliberately filled up. There is a tradition which says that Porter Hanks, on the eventful morning of July 17, 1812, when he awoke to find the British guns glaring at him from across his stockade, threw many of his ordnance pieces into the well. It is true that there is a discrepancy of 15 guns between the last available ordnance return, that of June 1794, and the return made the day following the capture--when the British were counting their gain. Whether or not they are even now reported in the bottom of the 30 foot well is a matter of conjecture.

*100 Map Accompanied Hookings Report, Sept. 20, 1792, Mich. Hist. Colls. X, 641.
*105 Capt. Gother Mann to Lord Dorchester, Dec. 6, 1793, Mich. Hist. Colls. XII, 53.
*110 Uriah Tracy to Sec. of War, Dec. 20, 1800; Mich. Hist. Colls. XVIII, 88.

In 1813 the British Capt. Bullock in discussing plans for the defense of Michilimackinac¹¹¹ says, It is "very important- that a deep well formerly cut thru the rock inside the Fort and which has been allowed to fill up by the sides falling in should be cleared, the garrison having no other means--but fetching it in tubs or buckets from a Spring outside the Fort---". I find no indication as to whether Bullock's recommendations was followed out but in 1828 the question arose again. In the inspection report of Fort Mackinac submitted to the Inspector General's Office for that year¹¹² we find, "The well which once afforded water enough for the purpose of a full garrison well, in the course of the summer, be cleared of the rubbish which now fills it to a depth of 80 feet and be retailed." I do not believe that this was ever done for in Bronschute's drawing of the Fort, made a few years later, there is no indication of a Post Well within the fort.¹¹³

In regard to restoring the well, I would recommend that an excavation be started and carried down ten or twelve feet with the proper stone walls. There should be a stone well curb at the top with a properly designed well house above it. I believe that, even tho the well was not dug out to the full depth, it would constitute an appealing feature of Old Fort Mackinac.

There was a latter well dug in the outer drill ground back of the fort about 1830.¹¹⁴ This was perhaps done in response to the inspection report of 1828 mentioned above. It was 24 feet deep and had a curb and well house which are shown in Bronschute's drawing.¹¹⁵ It was soon found, however, that the water supply was not constant and the heart-breaking work of tilling the water up the hill was again resorted to.

This well was also filled in sometime after 1830 and the depression in the ground may still be seen a short distance north of the main fort.

- 11 Capt. Richard Bullock to Sec. Treas. Oct. 22, 1813, Mich. Hist. Coll. 1813-1814.
12 Inspection Report of 1828 in Files of Inspector Gen. Office, P. 14.
13 Birds eye view perspective by W. Bronschute about 1830-1835 in possession of the
Temple, 16 Washington Ave., Mackinac, Mich.
14 From Kelton's Annals of Fort Mackinac, 1883, Mackinac.
15 Birds eye view perspective by W. Bronschute about 1830-1835 in possession of the
Temple, 16 Washington Ave., Mackinac, Mich.

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XIX POST FLAG STAFF

The main flag staff at Fort Mackinac was erected in 1835 at its present location in front of Fort Officers Quarters No. 5. There is a bottle containing a parchment record of the event buried in the foundation which was found when repairs were effected in 1869 and re-interred.

The above report summarizes the history and present condition of the principal buildings attached to Fort Mackinac and also contains recommendations for repairs and maintenance. The suggestions for restoring the buildings are not based upon a slavish return to original bark roofs and log exteriors but upon a translation of these in modern materials. The evident details of the buildings such as the finish hardware, lighting fixtures, and design of doors and trim are very important. These things poorly done will destroy all other efforts at a proper restoration.

There are other buildings connected with the Fort establishment which have not been considered of enough importance to be included. These consist of the superintendent's cottage, helms quarters, stables and shops. These are all outside of the fort enclosure. About 1905 there were torn down several older buildings to the northeast of the ramparts which included the bake shop, coal shed, scale house and carpenter shop. None of them was very old or of any importance historically and I believe I may say that this report covers all of Fort Mackinac that it might be desirable to restore and preserve. I also believe that the information is authentic and as complete as possible without having access to the files of the War Department in regard to the American occupation after 1786 and 1815.

To the hope that it will lead to a restoration program that will bring to old Fort Mackinac the distinction which is its inherent right, this report is respectfully submitted.

Most respectfully submitted by

Walter L. Rood
Warren L. Rood
Mackinac Island, Michigan
Nov. 1, 1934

RAMPARTS OF FORT MACKINAC
Mackinac Island, Mackinac County
Michigan

- OWNER: Fort Mackinac is a part of the state park of Mackinac Island, belonging to the State of Michigan. It was ceded by Act of Congress in 1895.
- CUSTODIAN: Mackinac Island State Park Commission - Mr. Manfred Burleigh, Chairman.
- DATE OF ERECTION: Started by the British under Lieutenant Governor Patrick Sinclair in 1781 and completed by the Americans in 1798.
- ARCHITECT: Unknown. Designer undoubtedly was Lieutenant Governor Patrick Sinclair, commandant at Fort Michilimackinac from October 4, 1779 to September 18, 1782.
- BUILDERS: Artisans and soldiers attached to Fort Michilimackinac.
- PRESENT CONDITION: Good.
- MATERIALS OF CONSTRUCTION: Walls are of limestone for about 3/4 of the perimeter with wood picketing surmounting the wall for about 1/2 of that distance. Remainder of ramparts, formerly of log construction with earth work between, is now open.
- Stone portion - outer veneer of mortared limestone. Interior of wall composed of loose rubble and refuse. Limestone was quarried on the island.
- OTHER EXISTING RECORDS: (1) Numerous references and sketches occurring in reports of Army Inspection Officers between the dates of 1797 and 1853, in files of the War Department at Washington. (2) References and plans for rebuilding the ramparts contained in correspondence between British Headquarters at Quebec and Fort Michilimackinac between the years 1797 and 1815. See the Michigan Historical Collections, Vol. 9 to 39, inclusive.
- ADDITIONAL DATA: The Ramparts of Fort Mackinac today enclose a much smaller area than originally laid out by their British builders. Governor Patrick Sinclair's ambitious plan was curtailed after the American occupation, probably in 1798. Four salients were eliminated and the ramparts located in about their present position.
- Of the stone ramparts - only the lower portion on the south which faces the bay can be original. Numerous

ADDITIONAL DATA: (Continued)

failures of the stone work are recorded in the early reports. On one occasion (1793) a piece of wall 40' long slid down the hill. The original construction was hasty and adequate bearings on the rock were never provided. Thus, numerous repairs and later additions to the height have obscured the original work. The old stone walls have recently been repaired and are in very good condition.

Of the original log work - nothing remains. It was built of local cedar which is easily rotted. The exact location of the walls has never been determined. Early maps show two salients toward the north and bastions on both the east and west which are now entirely missing.

The present coping of the remparts is of concrete which replaces the old log frazing. This is a vast improvement over the former as it keeps the frost out of the walls. It was the action of the frost through the century and a quarter of time since the Americans completed the walls which has so seriously impaired their strength.

The source of the above information is a report compiled by the writer for the National Park Service during 1934. It was written after a careful search of early records and historical data. An important reference source was the letters and inspection reports on Fort Mackinac contained in the Michigan Historical Collections, Vol. 9 to 39 inclusive.

(Signed) "Warren L. Rindge"
District Officer
November 8, 1936.

F. Orla Varney
F. Orla Varney
District Officer
May 3, 1937.